



Long Island Sound Study
A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound



Photo: Elizabeth Hornstein



Sustainable and Resilient Communities 3rd Annual Workshop

Planning for Inundation: Considerations for Engaging in Buyout Programs to Increase Community Resilience

Wednesday, December 11, 2024 – 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM EST

Workshop Rules



Please keep your phones and audio on mute and keep your camera off too!



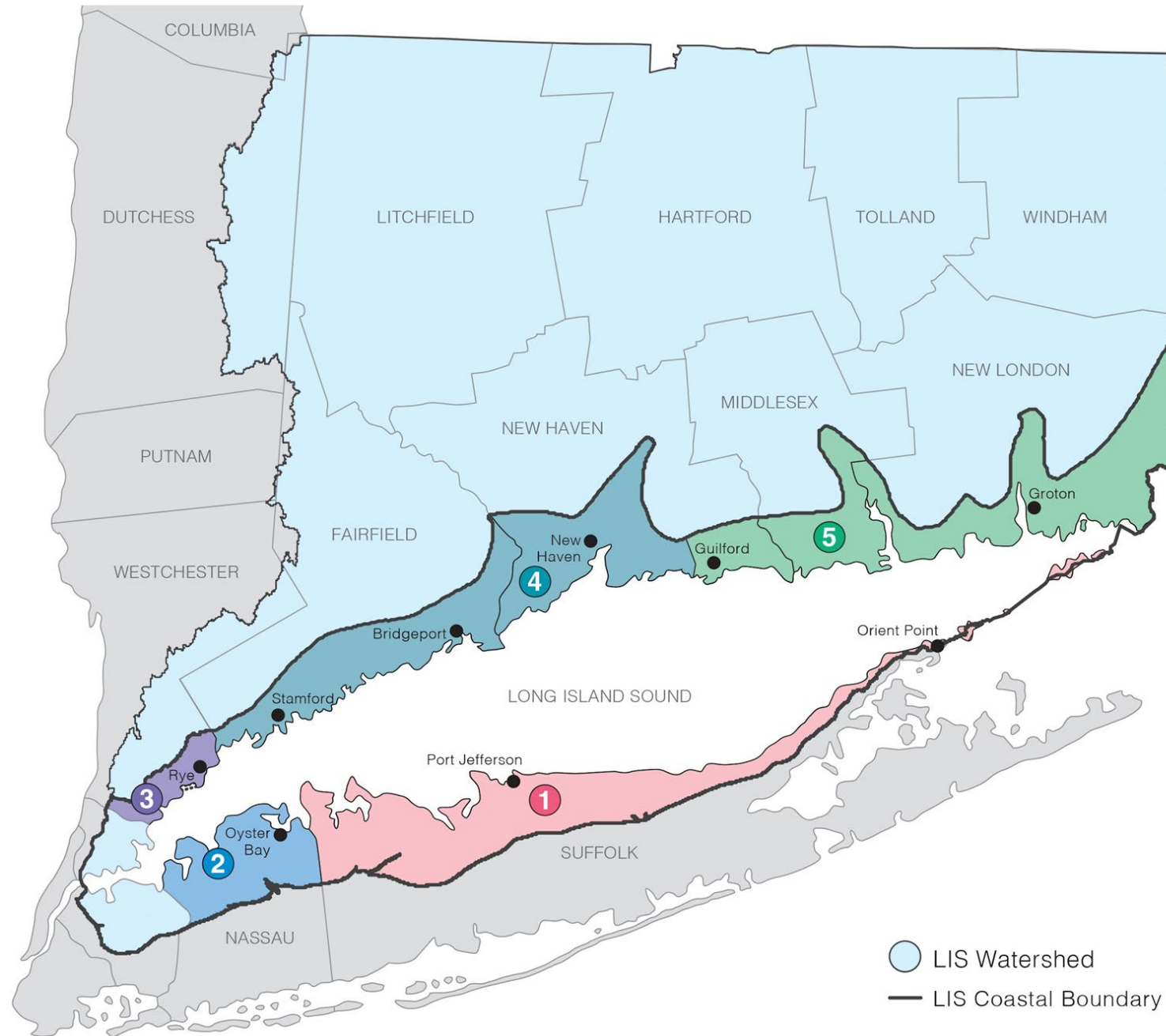
Workshop will be recorded and made available to attendees afterward



We will be using interactive polls to gather feedback



Please use the chat for questions for speakers or technical issues



Sustainable & Resilient Communities (SRC) Extension Professionals



1

Suffolk County
Elizabeth Hornstein



2

Nassau County
Sarah Schaefer-Brown



3

Westchester County
Sara Powell



4

Western CT
Deb Visco Abibou



5

Eastern CT
Sarah Schechter



Long Island Sound Study

A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound

2025 Comprehensive Conservation & Management Proposed Goals

1. Clean Waters & Healthy Watersheds
2. Thriving Habitats & Abundant Wildlife
3. Informed & Engaged Public
4. Sustainable & Resilient Communities

Goal:
Empower communities to plan for and respond to environmental challenges in ways that prioritize well-being for all.



Informed Decision-Makers

Grow the number of municipal, nonprofit, and community leaders receiving training and support to increase capacity for adaptation to environmental challenges.



Community-Driven Resilience Planning

Increase the number of municipalities that identify key resilience priorities through local and/or regional community-driven planning processes.



Resilience Initiative Implementation

Implement initiatives to improve community resilience to flooding and other environmental challenges.

Finding climate resources should be easy

The Long Island Sound Resilience Resource Hub is here to help your community. Learn about environmental challenges, planning solutions, and how to implement and sustain projects now.

Select your Planning Phase, Location, and/or Topic of interest to access a filtered selection of our curated resources and tools.

Planning Phase

Select a Planning Phase



Location

Select a Location



Topic

Select a Topic



Get Started



[Insert opening poll Q: Where are you from? (map)]

Please indicate the sector that best represents you:

 0

(1) Federal or state government

0

(2) Indigenous Nation or Community

0

(3) Local Government

0

(4) Nonprofit/NGO

0

(5) Watershed Organization

0

(6) Community Group

0

(7) Consultant

0

(8) Academia

0

(9) Interested Individual

0



[Insert opening poll Q: What do you think of or feel when you hear the words “buyout” or “relocation”?]



[Insert opening poll Q: How familiar are you with buyout programs?

- Very familiar (I have participated in or administered a buyout program)
- Somewhat familiar (buyout programs have been discussed in my community)
- Less familiar (I have heard of buyout programs and am interested to learn more)]



Session Facilitator

Climate Adaptation in New York

Alison Branco, Ph.D, Director of Climate Adaptation, The Nature Conservancy in NY



Rye Brook, NY Case Study: Voluntary buyouts of flood-prone properties

Chris Bradbury, Administrator, Village of Rye Brook

Michal Nowak, Superintendent of Public Works and Engineering, Village of Rye Brook



Lessons from Sandy: Evolving Buyout Strategies for Resilient Communities

Rachel Wieder, Chief of Staff, Homeownership and Community Development, NYS Homes and Community Renewal



Creating Space for Emotions in Retreat and Relocation Work

Jessica Brunacini, Ph.D, Director of the Coastal Training Program, Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve



Climate Adaptation in New York

Alison Branco, Ph.D.
Climate Adaptation Director
The Nature Conservancy in New York

The Nature
Conservancy



Floodplain Benefits

- Convey and store water
- Allow groundwater recharge
- Enhance biodiversity
- Dampen storm energy and waves
(\$625 million damage prevented from Superstorm Sandy by NY/NJ wetlands)*
- Contain agriculture and forestry resources
- Recreational opportunities
- Greens space co-benefits (mental health, social cohesion, public health, etc.)

*Narayan et al, 2017



Flooding Impacts

- In NY: 20 floods in 25 years, 20 in 100 prior years
- \$8 Billion annually in flood damages (US)
- 100 lives lost per year (US)
- 100 yr floodplain = at least 1 flood per 30-year mortgage
- Caused by increased frequency and intensity of storms, heavier rainfall, impervious cover, sea level rise, and groundwater flooding – or a combo
- Impacts range from nuisance, to chronic, to catastrophic
- Impacts are experienced disproportionately



THE OLD WAY



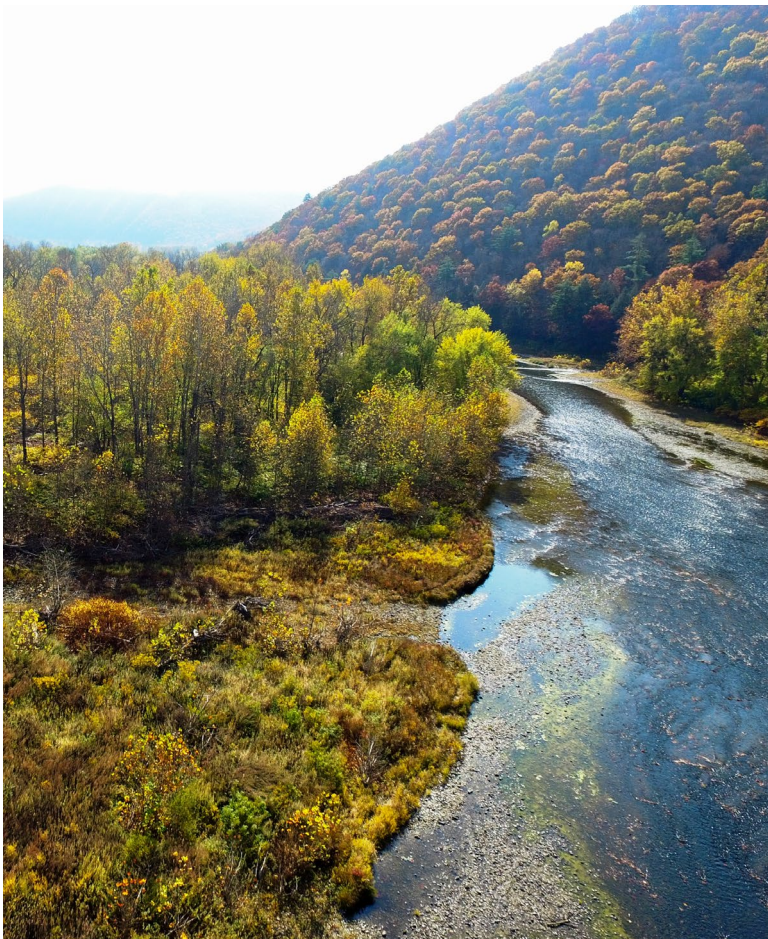
DEFEND

ACCOMMODATE

RETREAT



THE NEW WAY



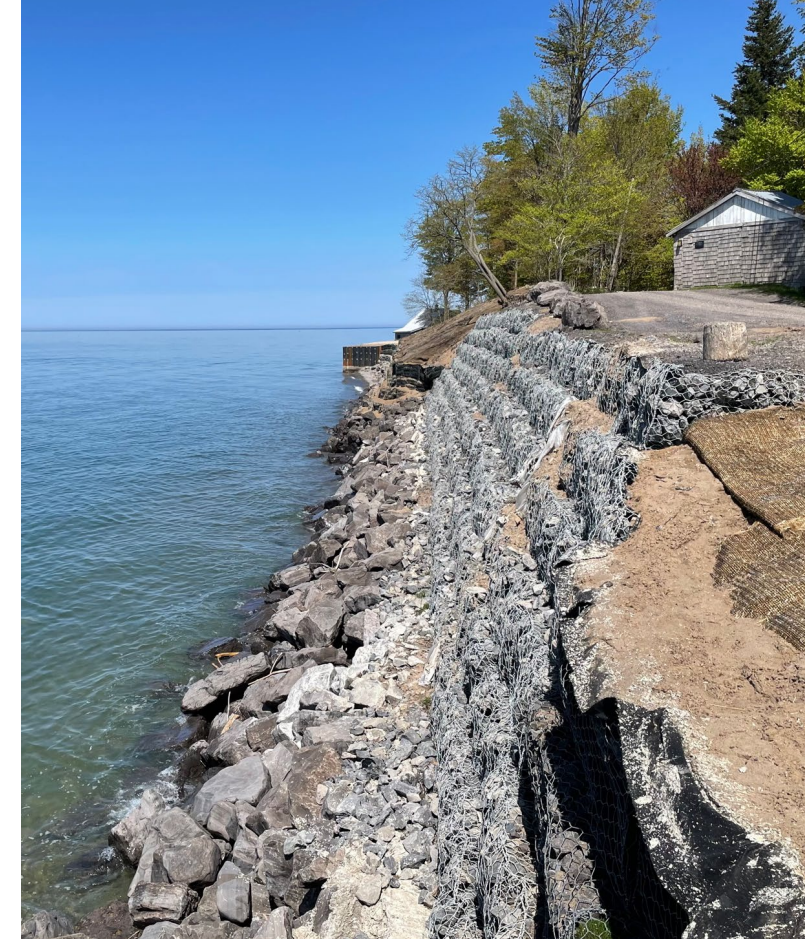
TNC/Matt Levine



© Brendan E. Casey_ShutterShock



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TNC/David Klein

PROTECT

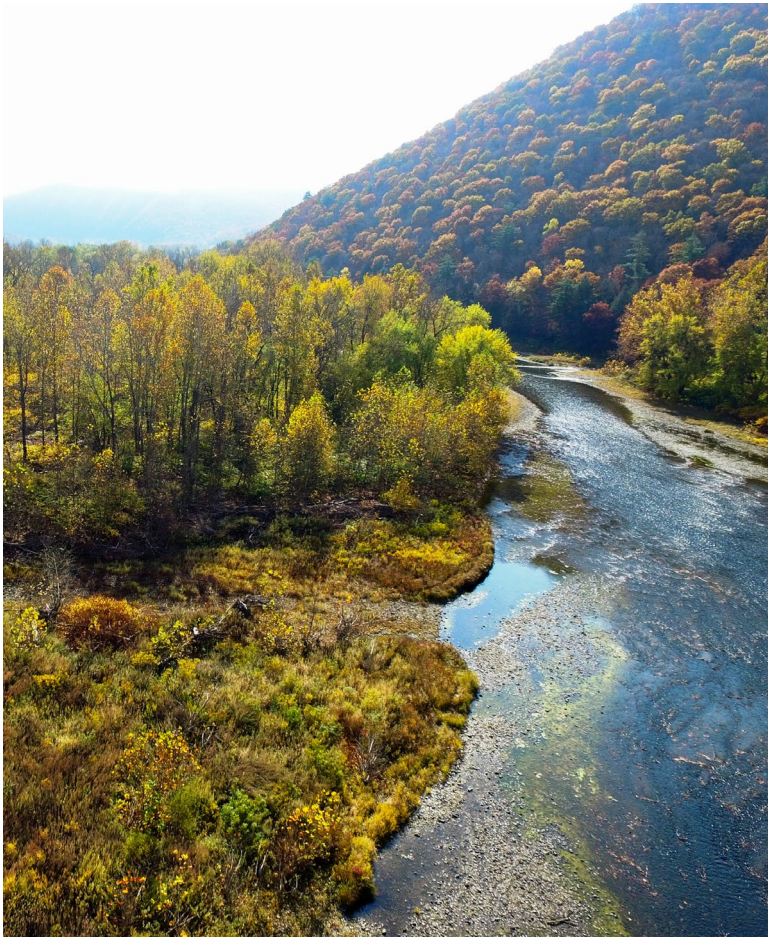
RETREAT

ACCOMMODATE

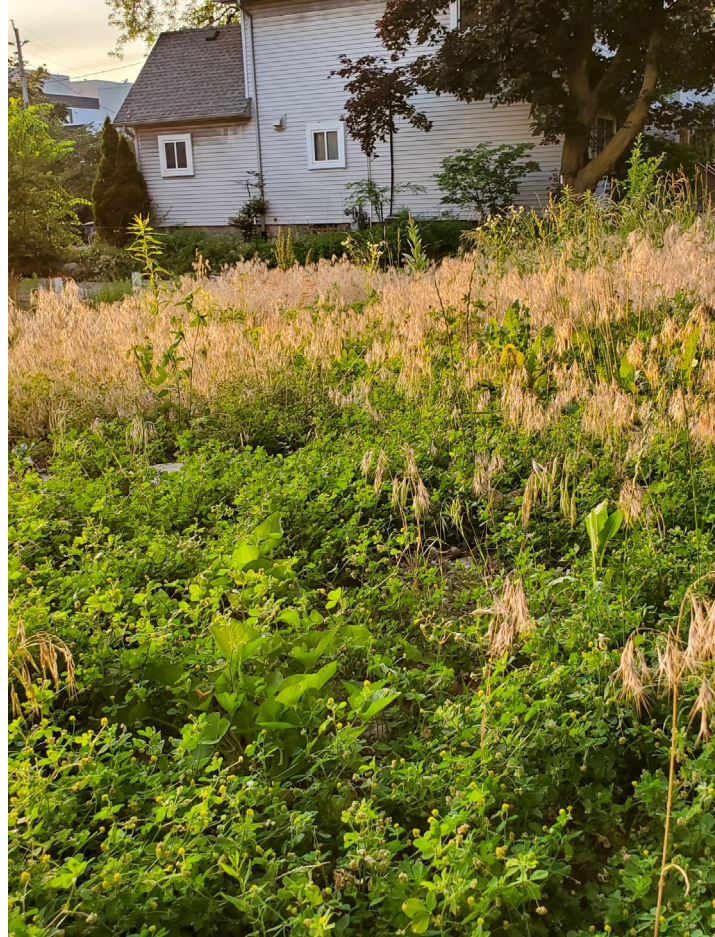
DEFEND



THE NEW WAY



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PROTECT

RETREAT

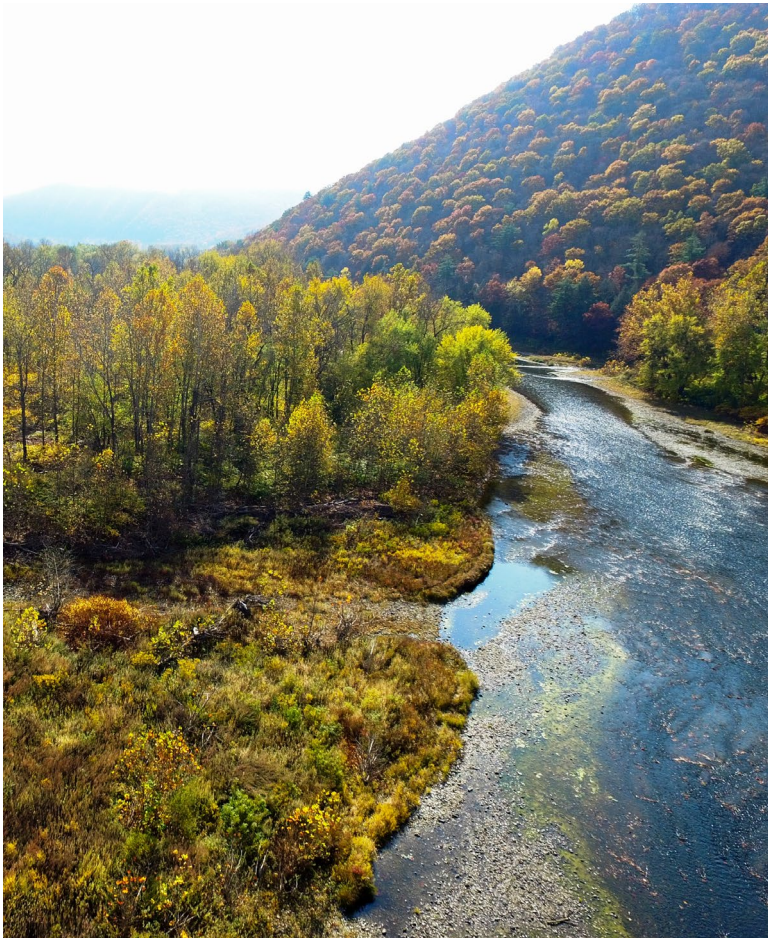
ACCOMMODATE

DEFEND

Permanent
Eliminates risk to people
Nature can adapt

Temporary
False sense of security
Ecosystems impacted

THE NEW WAY



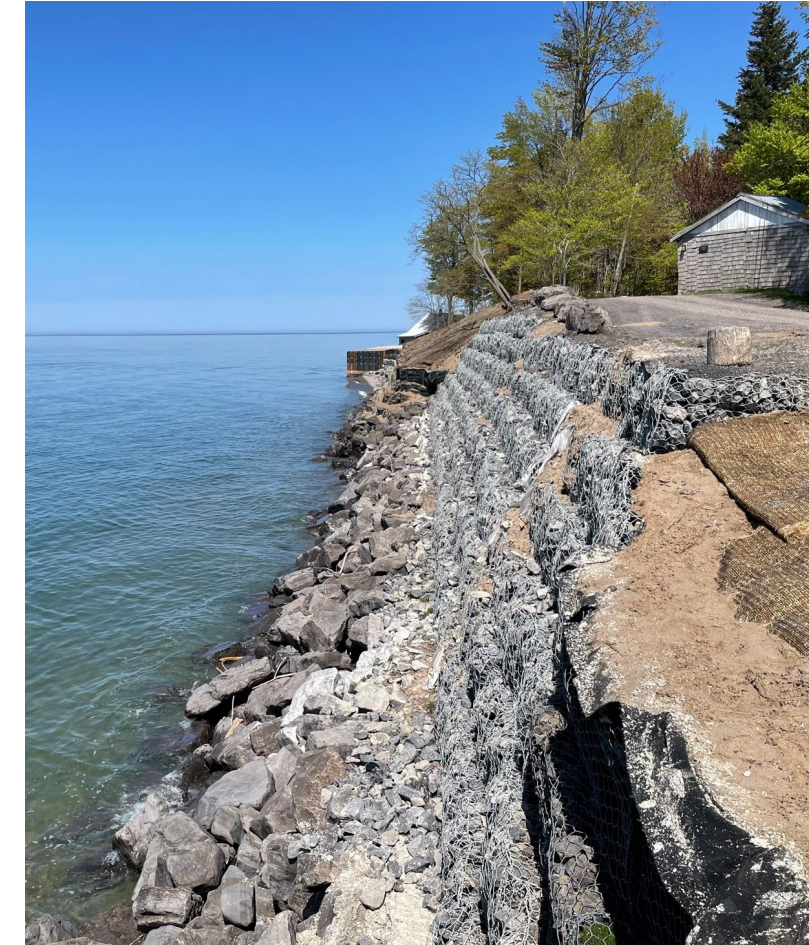
TNC/Matt Levine



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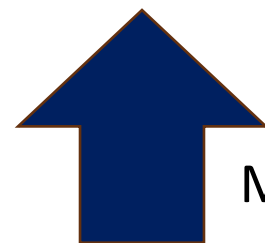
TNC/David Klein

PROTECT

RETREAT

ACCOMMODATE

DEFEND



Make Way for Water

BUYOUTS



Nov 11, 2012 aerials of coastal destruction caused by Hurricane Sandy storm surge along the New Jersey Shore. © Bridget Besaw

If 'community decides,' we'll offer buyout, Cuomo tells Staten Island Sandy victims (photos/video)

Updated: Nov. 18, 2013, 11:47 p.m. | Published: Nov. 18, 2013, 10:47 p.m.

NY to Buy Homes in Staten Island Neighborhood Hit by Sandy

Sandy appears to have finally persuaded residents in a Staten Island flood-prone neighborhood to give up and move out

PBS NEWS HOUR

Three years later, buyouts help Sandy-battered residents retreat to new homes

Oct 31, 2015 3:14 PM EDT

NEWS

How the Sandy-era buyout program turned bustling Staten Island communities into vacant overgrown lots



NY's ENVIRONMENTAL BOND ACT

Restoration and Flood Risk Reduction Min. \$1B

Voluntary Property Buyout Max. \$250M

Property Acquisition

Demolition and removal of structure and/or infrastructure on property

Restoration of natural resources to facilitate beneficial open space, flood mitigation, shoreline stabilization

Coastal Rehabilitation, Shoreline Restoration & Inland Flooding Min. \$200M

Local waterfront revitalization plans

Floodplain, wetland, and stream restoration

Habitat restoration



Rye Brook & NRCS Recovery (Buyout) Program

Chris Bradbury, Village Administrator

Michal Nowak, Supt. of Public Works/Engineering

Storm History & Studies

History of Area Flooding since 2000:

2004 Hurricane Frances 1" - 6" rain

2005 Unnamed Storm 5.25" rain

2007 Unnamed Storm 4" rain

2007 Nor'easter 8" rain

2011 TS Irene & TS Lee 7"+ rain

2012 Hurricane Sandy

2021 (Aug) TS Henri 6" rain

2021 (Sept) TS Ida 9"+ rain total (4"+ in 1 hr.)

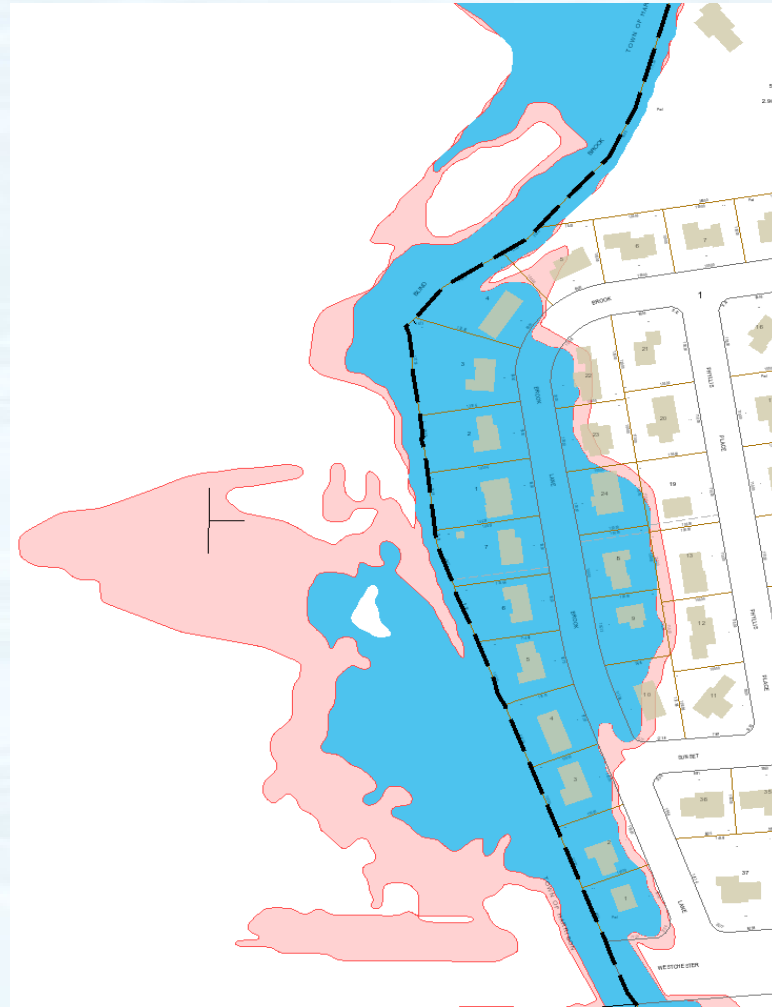
Many studies: Engineering firms, NYSDEC, Army Corps, etc.

Brook Lane/Wyman St - Limited solutions & lack of regional planning.

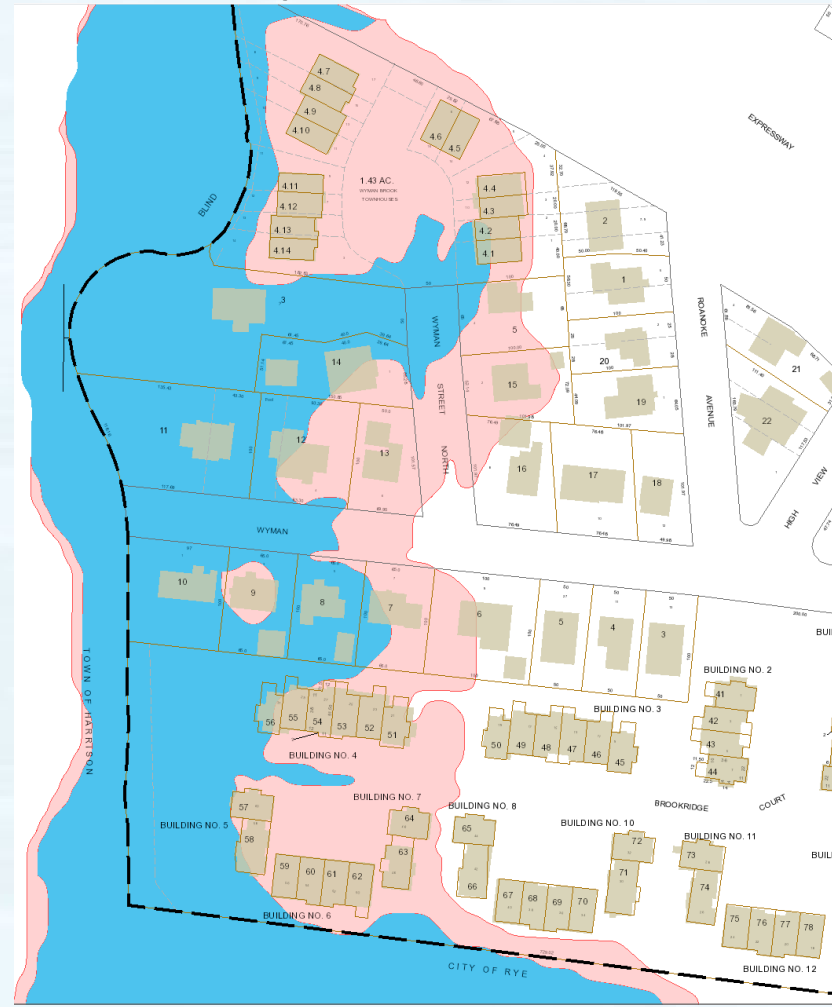
Eligible Areas

Rye Brook: Blind Brook Watershed (LI Sound)

Brook Lane



Wyman Street



Brook Lane – TS Ida (2021)



NRCS Recovery (Buyout) Program Overview

- Reduce threat to life and property.
- Define eligible areas. Field trips & history.
- *Memo of Understanding*
- Rough Budget Est.: AV's (land, buildings), appraisals, environ database search, title co work, surveys, closing costs, title policy, demolition, restoration, atty costs, eng. Costs, etc.
- NRCS state reps get approval from NRCS fed office
- If approved, funds get sent to state reps.
- Muni & NRCS enter into *Cooperative Agreement*

Resident Coordination

In person, virtual, hand-delivery, email blasts, meet at homes, etc.

Established web page www.ryebrookny.gov/ida

Residents submitted non-binding application (deeds, proof of ownership, tenant info, and disaster compensation received).

Rye Brook sent applications to NRCS for approval.

Rye Brook selected appraiser. Full market value day before Ida.
Reviewed by NRCS. NON-NEGOTIABLE.

If accepted, proceed with environ review (oil tanks), surveys,
Tenant Relocation Act notifications, title work, then closings.

Closings & Demo

Typical closings & fees but no real estate commission.

Municipality develops eng. plans for demo and restoration (with NRCS approval)

Municipality prepares bids, demolishes homes, restores & maintains property.

Key Partnerships

The Nature Conservancy: NFP PILOT program to encourage participation in NRCS program. Provided up to 3% of purchase price directly to property owners.

Housing Action Council: NFP needed to coordinate/comply with Tenant Relocation Act. Notices, eligibility, relocation assistance & moving expenses.

Suggestions & Lessons Learned

Significant time commitment – but worth it. *“Look for ways to say yes.”*

Communicate often & be realistic with time frames (2-3 years from program start).

Go door to door if necessary but do not pressure owners.

Have flexibility with resident deadlines/closings if possible.

Lots of paperwork- *stay organized.*

Single Audit so involve Treasurer/Comptroller early.

Be aware of timing of NRCS advance payments/reimbursement.

Suggestions & Lessons Learned (continued)

Surveys = title issues (encroachments, etc.)

Program is an option but many will not choose to leave – they will want some reassurance they are not forgotten.

Helpful to contact other munis in program & consider professional service companies with program experience.

NRCS staff is great- very helpful & flexible when possible.

Need for better regional stormwater planning.

Contact Information

Chris Bradbury

cbradbury@ryebrookny.gov

(914) 939-0634

Michal Nowak

mnowak@ryebrookny.gov

(914) 939-0753



[Insert poll Q: Which obstacles to participation in buyout programs do you think are most important **for administrators?** (provide a list and ask people to choose top 3)

- **Loss of tax base:** Concern with loss of taxable properties that are bought out.
- **Capacity:** Having the necessary staff, resources, and time to implement the buyout program.
- **Support:** Getting support from elected officials and community members.
- **Financial timing:** Obtaining a desirable interest rate; Program timing working for resident's needs.
- **Financial feasibility:** Coming up with an acceptable purchase price; Home prices in my municipality are too expensive.
- **Geographic continuity:** Not getting enough people adjacent to each other to participate to improve the floodplain.
- **Other]**



[Insert poll Q: Which obstacles to participation in buyout programs do you think are most important **for homeowners?** (provide a list and ask people to choose top 3)

- **Loss of tax base:** Concern with loss of taxable properties that are bought out.
- **Capacity:** Having the necessary staff, resources, and time to implement the buyout program.
- **Support:** Getting support from elected officials and community members.
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- **Other]**



Homes and Community Renewal

Flood Buyouts

NYS Office of Resilient Homes and Communities

DECEMBER 2024



About HCR & RHC



NY Rising Buyouts



Blue Buffers Buyouts

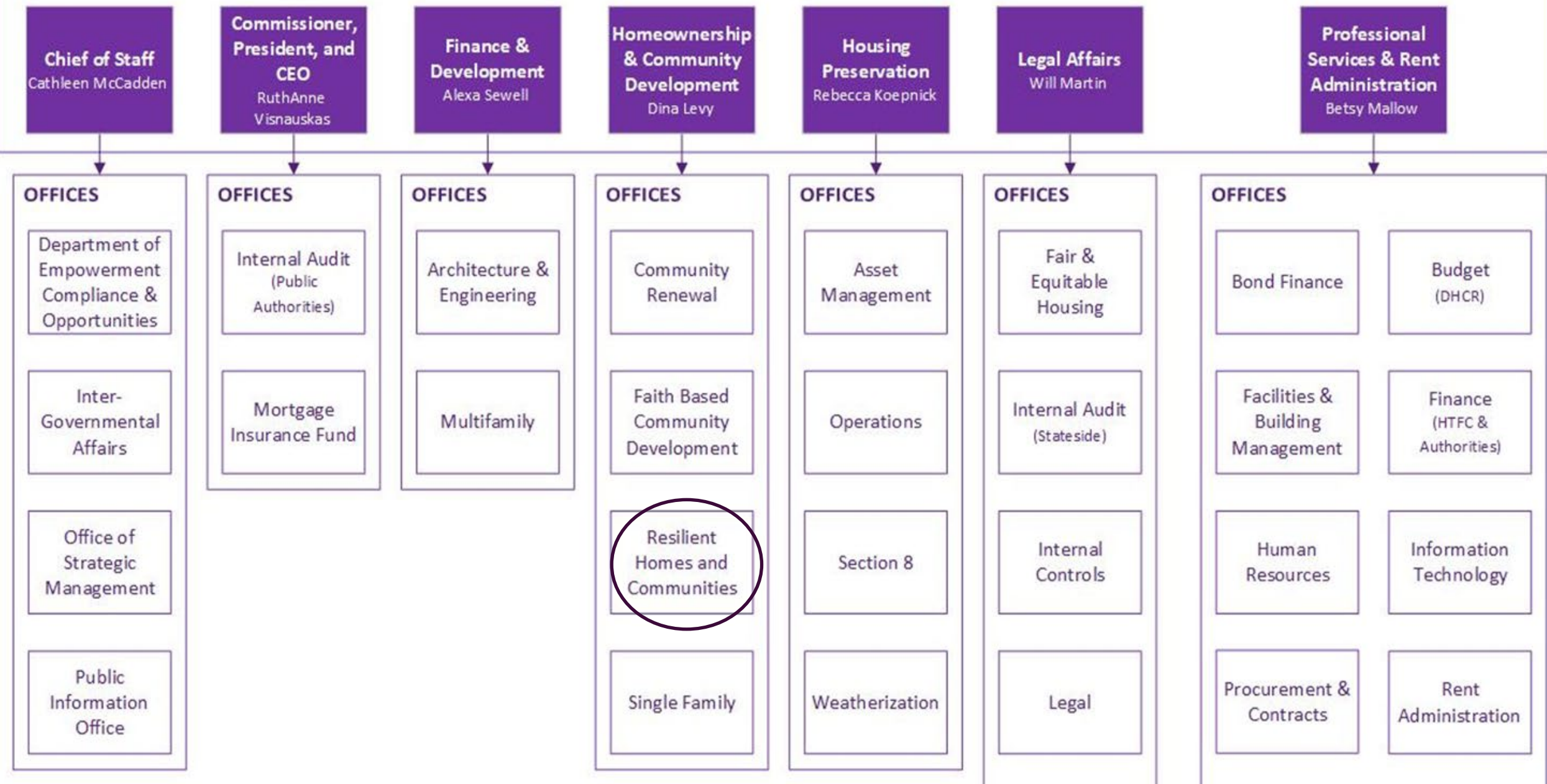
Presentation Overview

New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR)

- Mission is to build, preserve, and protect affordable housing and increase homeownership throughout the state.
- Charged with executing Governor Hochul's \$25 billion, five-year, comprehensive housing plan to increase housing supply by creating or preserving 100,000 affordable homes.
- Homeownership and Community Development includes:
 - State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA)
 - Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC)
 - Office of Community Renewal (OCR)
 - Office of Resilient Homes and Communities (RHC)
 - Governor's Office of Faith-Based Initiatives



PROGRAMS



Office of Resilient Homes & Communities

- Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) was established **June 2013** to coordinate State-wide recovery efforts for **Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee**.
- Office of Resilient Homes and Communities (RHC) was announced as a permanent office in October 2022 by Governor Hochul and assumed GOSR's portfolio.
- RHC administers **CDBG-DR** funds provided by HUD:
 - Hurricane Sandy allocation: \$4.5B
 - National Disaster Resiliency allocation: \$35.8m
 - Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee allocation: \$71.6m
 - Hurricane Ida allocation: \$68m
- RHC administers state-funded programs
 - Blue Buffers: \$250m for flood buyouts
 - Rapid Relief: \$20m grants to storm-impacted homeowners to make emergency repairs
 - Resilient Retrofits: \$30m low interest loans to homeowners to make resiliency improvements

NY Rising Buyouts



Program	Program Area	Closings Held	Closing Value
BUYOUTS	Oakwood Beach Buyouts	309	\$ 126m
	Ocean Breeze Buyouts	94	\$ 35m
	Graham Beach Buyouts	102	\$ 41m
	Long Island Buyouts	155	\$ 55m
	Upstate Buyouts	62	\$ 17m
ACQS	Nassau Acquisitions	225	\$ 88m
	Suffolk Acquisitions	212	\$ 84m
	NYC Acquisitions	124	\$ 37m
	Upstate Acquisitions	7	\$ 1m
TOTALS		1,290	\$ 486m

NY Rising Buyouts Program Design

Selection Process

- Damage and risk data analysis
- Consultation with local units of government
- Purchased homes directly from participating homeowners

Eligibility Criteria

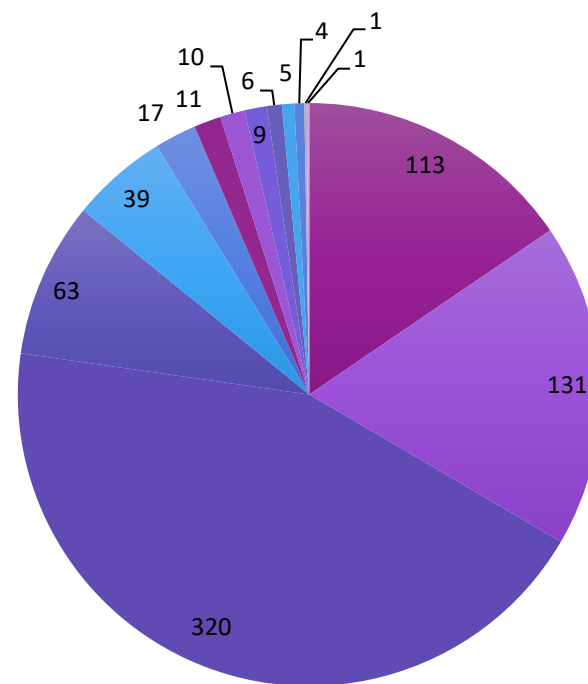
- Home damaged by declared storm
- Located in designated buyout areas
- Primary residence of homeowner participant
- Homeowner is a US Citizen

Award Size

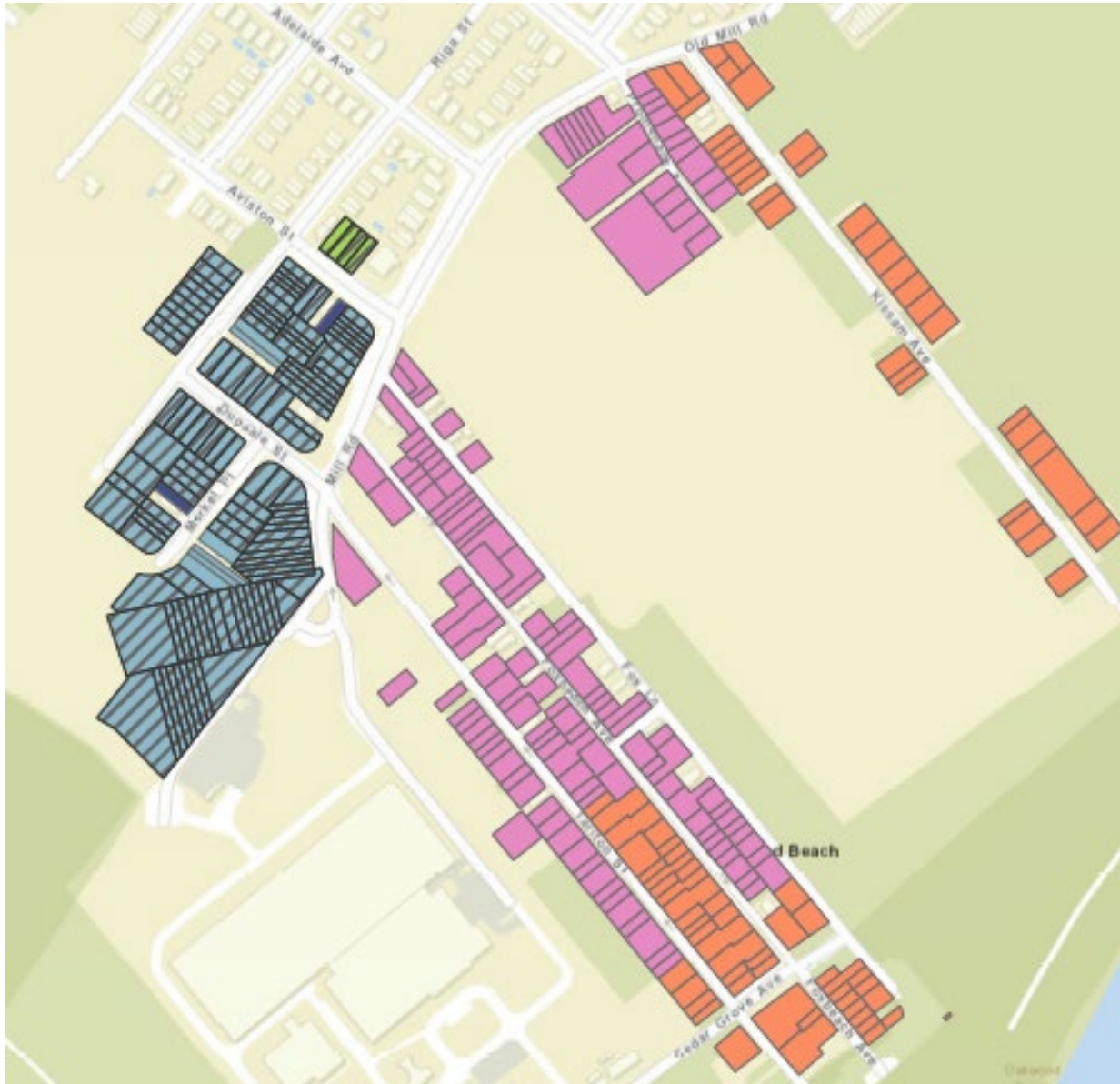
- Pre-storm FMV
- Up to 15% relocation bonus

NY Rising Buyouts

Property Dispositions



- SI Youth Soccer League
- NYC DEP/Parks
- Lindenhurst
- Civic Association
- Pickman Remmer Wetlands
- NYC Project Rebuild
- Warwick
- Lot Next Door
- Brookhaven
- Southampton
- Patchogue
- Babylon
- Oakwood Veteran VFW
- East Fishkill

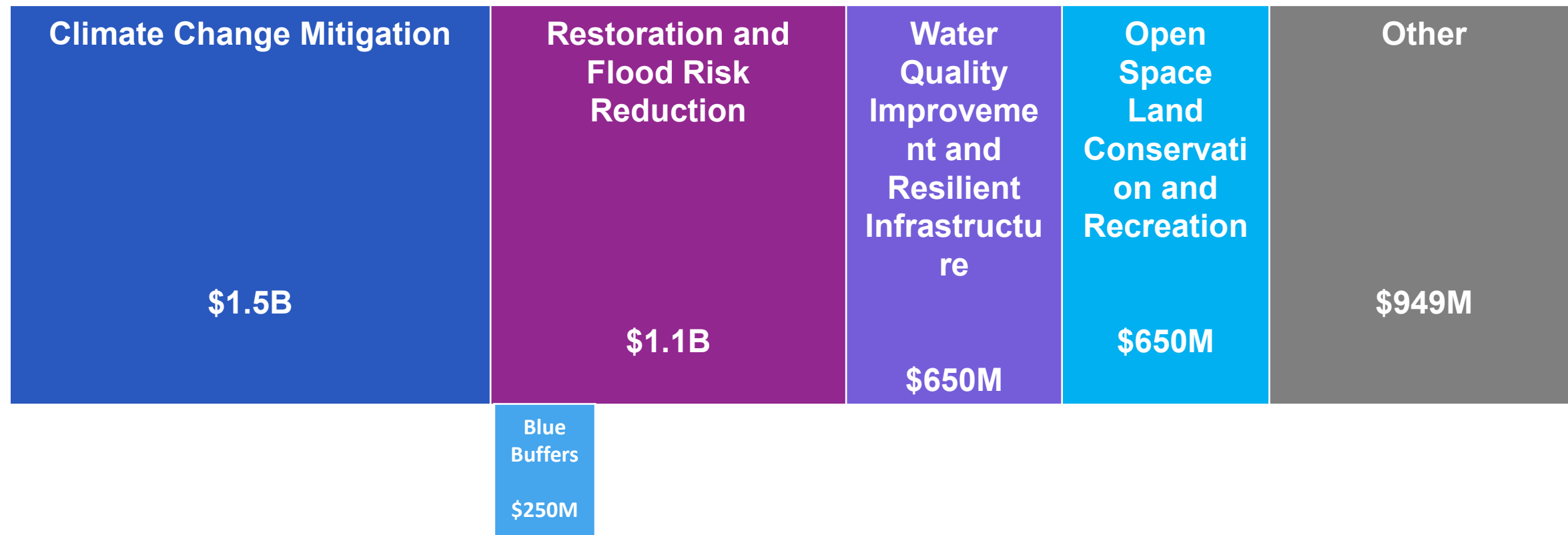


NY Rising
Buyouts

Oakwood Beach
NYC

Blue Buffers: EBA-Funded Program

Environmental Bond Act
\$4.2 Billion



Blue Buffers: EBA Requirements

- Prioritize projects in communities based on past flood risk
- Eligible buyouts properties can be those:
 - Within the one-hundred-year floodplain
 - Have a history of repetitive and severe repetitive losses
 - Exacerbate flooding in other locations
 - Could provide additional flood damage mitigation for surrounding properties
 - Have been damaged by declared storms
- EBA requires 35% all funds be spent in Disadvantaged Communities

Blue Buffers: Program Launch

So far...

- Winter 2024, NOFA to nonprofits to administer program
- Spring 2024, inter-state-agency working group
- Summer 2024, flood risk data analysis
- Fall 2024, award selection of program administrator

Up coming...

Winter 2025, develop policies and procedures

Spring 2025, outreach to local units of government

Summer 2025, community outreach with residents

Blue Buffers: Flood Risk Landscape

- 1,736 Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)
- 4,258 repetitive loss structures are in DACs, 445 have suffered severe repetitive losses
- 46,349 residential buildings within DACs are within the 100-year flood plain

The need is much greater than available funding. We need to set prioritizations and principles for Blue Buffers program.



Mamaroneck, NY after Ida
Source: (Jeff Edwards/Patch)

Blue Buffers: Principles

- Prioritize areas most at risk of flooding, while ensuring geographic distribution statewide.
- Prioritize disadvantaged communities and residents without resources to mitigate risk.
- Prioritize communities without other flood mitigation options; buyouts are necessary/impactful.
- Aim for cooperation and buy-in from local governments at all stages of the program.

Blue Buffers: Principles

- Ensure a truly voluntary program and transparency for participants.
- Provide wrap-around-services for participants to eliminate barriers to participation, such as dedicated case management, relocation services, downpayment/closing cost funding, pro-bono legal counsel, fair and transparent appraisal process.
- Promote post-buyout end use planning to integrate buyouts into conservation, open space ecological restoration, and natural buffer zones.
- Leverage other funding sources to expand program impact.
- Collaborate with local stakeholders and community organizations to implement the program in a way that works for the community.

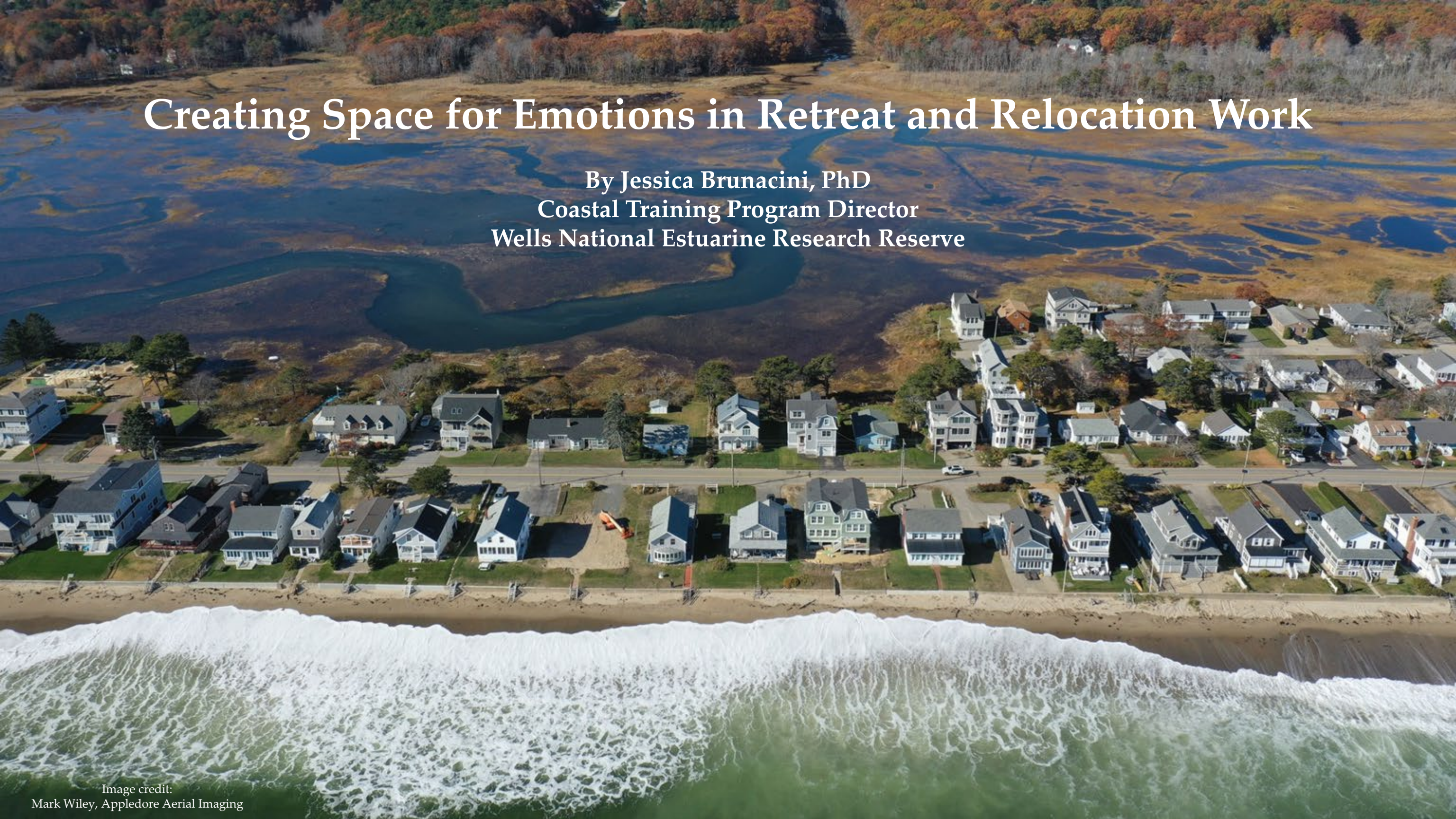


Rachel Wieder
Chief of Staff
Homeownership & Community Development
rachel.wieder@hcr.ny.gov

Questions?

Creating Space for Emotions in Retreat and Relocation Work

By Jessica Brunacini, PhD
Coastal Training Program Director
Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve

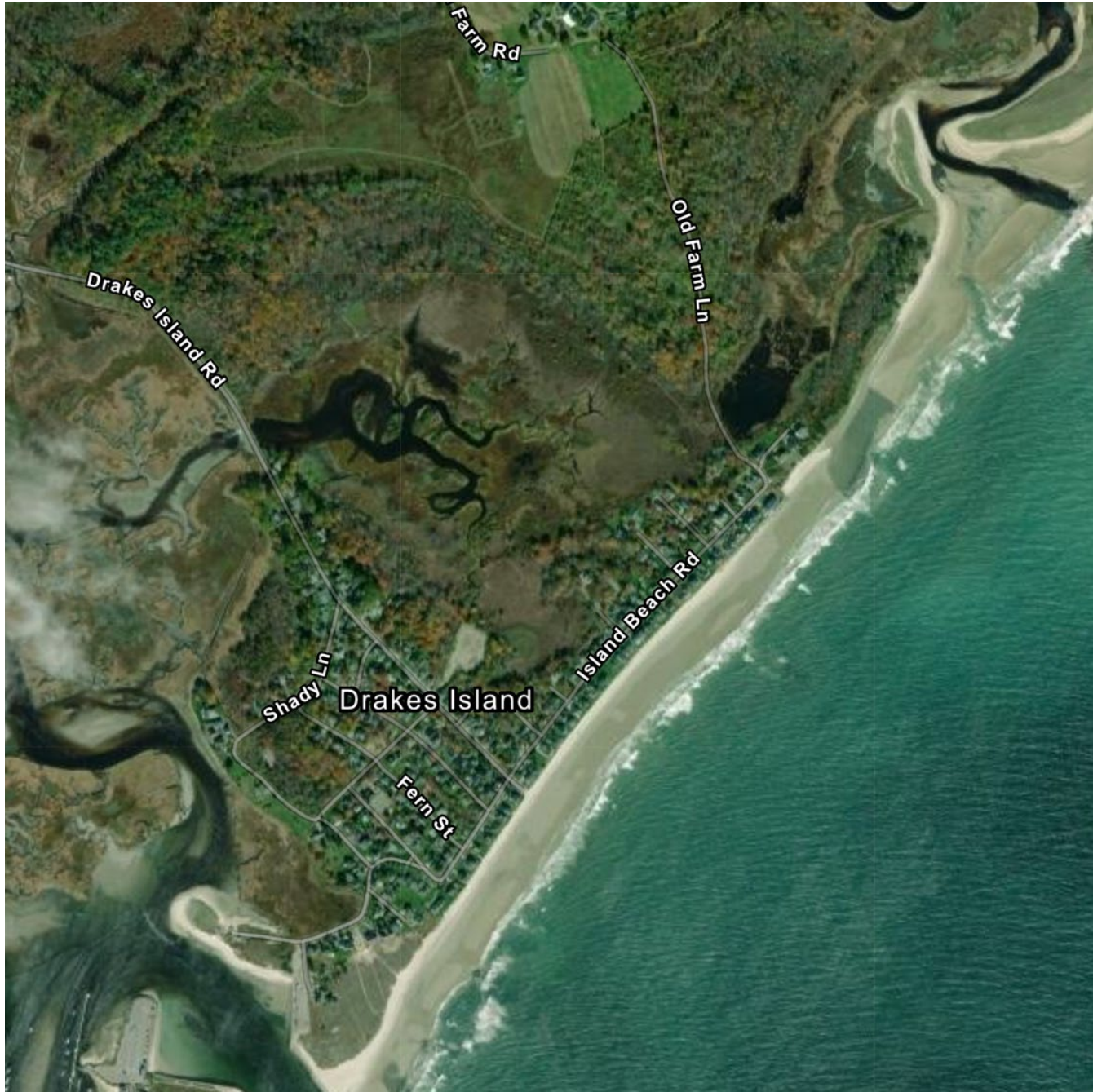


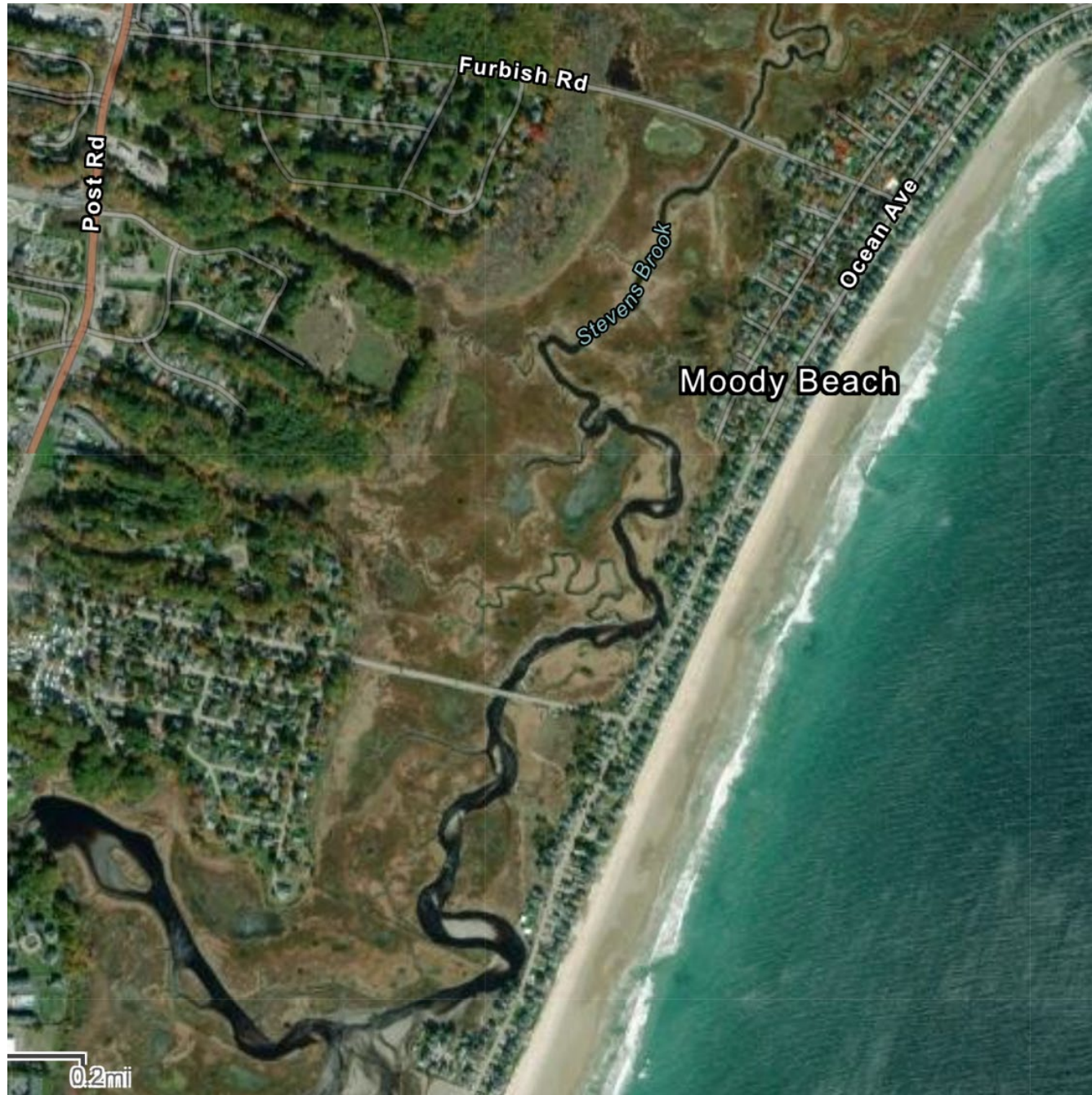
How we **respond to the impacts of flooding** is a complex, technical matter. For many, it is also a **deeply emotional experience.**

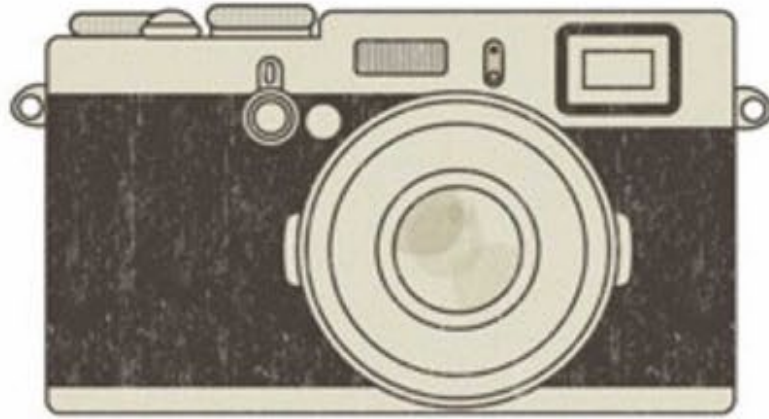
Place Attachment:

The bonding that occurs
between individuals and
their meaningful environments.









Photovoice

**When it comes to [this place],
what do you care about most?**



“According to my grandparents, Drakes Island is a completely different place than the sleepy beach community of 50 years ago...Storms are more severe and weather is less predictable, and it seems like the seawalls will need to be fortified in coming decades. I **sometimes worry about the future of my relationship to Drakes Island as it continues to change**, but it's reassuring that even as things change around them, my family remains a constant.”



“The weather that day was clear and sunny, mid-50’s, winds out of the west at 5 MPH. By all accounts, a rather lovely day in November. A King Tide occurred around noon reaching heights of +11.4 feet. **This aerial footage shows the impact of the sea, ON A GOOD DAY.** Imagine adding to the mix stronger winds off the ocean, or even a storm event? These potential compounding effects could be even more devastating.”



“About a hundred yards from the “Drakes Island” marker on the Barrier Beach trail, this sign is a sobering reminder that **future generations of Drakes Island residents will be displaced and lose their homes if sea levels continue to rise to their projected levels.**”

“Is it stupid and selfish to hold on to this, rather than, say, **okay, we've had a good run of, you know, 60 years or so.** And maybe cash in on it. But I'm selfishly holding on to it and hoping I can still drive onto the island for the rest of my life.”

“I'm concerned about, you know, will the cottage be able to be the same in 20 years? Or will the waves breaking over the seawall...water coming over...will they have to rebuild it or build a new house? Because the water levels have increased so much? But I don't honestly spend a lot of time thinking about this, because then it will give me anxiety. It will make me anxious.”

“It was heartbreaking, over the winter when there were storms, to watch the waves come over the dune...It's scary, because you're like, this place isn't forever...it's undeniable that there is change.”

**“Our house is not on the beach,
but I expect it will be someday.”**

*“At what point do you decide,
this is economically not sensible to stay here?”*


Place Attachment:

The bonding that occurs
between individuals and
their meaningful environments.



Place Attachment:

The bonding that occurs between individuals and their meaningful environments.



“Place Detachment”:

A process “whereby individuals and groups anticipate and negotiate the negative future consequences of remaining in a place by **intentionally loosening existing attachments** and forming new ones elsewhere.” Agyeman et al. 2009, pg. 512

Place Attachment:

The bonding that occurs between individuals and their meaningful environments.



“Place Detachment”:

A process “whereby individuals and groups anticipate and negotiate the negative future consequences of remaining in a place by **intentionally loosening existing attachments** and forming new ones elsewhere.” Agyeman et al. 2009, pg. 512

How we respond to the impacts of flooding is a complex, technical matter. For many, it is also a deeply emotional experience.

Lead with Listening

A Guidebook For
Community Conversations
On Climate Migration



- Center community members as experts
- Earn trust
- Consider culture, not just buildings
- Acknowledge trauma
- Speak to fear and anxiety
- Recognize power structures
- Use language that speaks to people's everyday lives

**Thanks so much,
and please feel free
to reach out.**

Jessica Brunacini, PhD (she/her)
Director, Coastal Training Program
Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve
342 Laudholm Farm Road
Wells, ME 04090
(207) 646-1555 x 114
jbrunacini@wellsnerr.org
www.wellsreserve.org

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WELLS NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE

wells**reserve** at laudholm



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Panel Discussion

*Planning for Inundation:
Considerations for Engaging in Buyout
Programs to Increase Community Resilience*



Please enter questions for the
panelists into the chat



To what extent did this session provide you with new knowledge that will help with community resilience planning?

(A) I found this session very informative and will be using one or more of these tools in my work!

0%

(B) I found this session informative but I still need more information to understand how I can use these tools.

0%

(C) I found this session informative but I am not sure if I will use these tools.

0%

(D) I did not learn new or useful information from this session.

0%



[Insert poll Q: Based on what you learned today, what additional resources or information would be helpful to you?]



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Thank You!

Visit the *Training Archive* on the *Long Island Sound Resilience Resource Hub* to view recordings and materials:



lisresilience.org/training-archive

